

THE A. P. of L. Weekly News Service gives news and analysis of labor relations, including interpretation of national and international news, and includes other information of interest to the trade union member.

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WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1946

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GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

VOL. 26, NO. 9

L. Challenges Government's Wage-Pace Jacket

Strikes Encouraged And Bargaining Frozen By New Policy

Washington, D. C.—The American Federation of Labor (AFL) has challenged the administration's new wage-price policy by offering inducements to its members to strike rather than seek justified wage increases through peaceful bargaining.

The main target of the AFL attack is the requirement contained in the President's executive order for obtaining prior government approval of wage rate increases—even those voluntarily agreed upon by labor and management—before they can go into effect.

No such requirement was imposed on striking steelworkers of the CIO in the settlement made in that case.

The government agency designated by the President to pass upon proposed wage boosts is the National War Labor Relations Board, which has a staff untrained to handle a vast flow of cases expeditiously. The extended delays may cause serious industrial unrest and lead workers to believe that the only way to get action promptly is by striking.

Miners Seeking Pay Hike; Call Wage Policy Parley

Washington, D. C.—The district presidents of the United Mine Workers of America landed a hit at a meeting here on March 11 of the union's Policy Committee to consider wage demands on the bituminous coal operators. President John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers said at the meeting of the district presidents, which had lasted 2 days, 10 days for a joint meeting, provides for 15 days of negotiations.

The announcement of the covering of the Policy Committee of 250 members was authorized by Mr. Lewis in the following statement:

"The union of the District Presidents of the United Mine Workers of America unanimously voted to convene the Policy Committee of the UMW, which makes all decisions affecting wage matters, to meet in Washington March 11 at 10 a. m."

"An official circular will be sent immediately to all local unions and affiliates of the UMW, notifying them of the resumption of the talks with the AFL."

"The new wage policy will be affected by the new wage-price formula announced by President Truman on Feb. 14."

"According to the new formula, employees may be paid at rates corresponding to changes in living costs since Jan. 1, 1941. The base new wage will be the same as the rate in January, 1941, rather than the straight-time hourly earnings, the latter a higher figure for it includes several components beyond the basic rate."

"If the basic rate of pay for miners is calculated in this way, the miners would be entitled to substantial increase above the present miners' scale."

M. Y. TO AID VETERANS IDLE BY STRIKES

Albany, N. Y.—Governor Dewey signed the Mills-Burke bill authorizing unemployment insurance benefits to veterans who are idle because of a strike. It was stated that as a measure for the new law would begin the week starting March 4.

Gov. Dewey said that veterans who have lost pay for 7 weeks through a strike would be eligible for benefits of \$20 a week until they are able to get back to work.

The fact that these federal allowances are cut off where a strike is in progress is the subject of a strike led to the introduction of the Mills-Burke bill, which would provide for the continuation of unemployment benefits during the period of a strike.

Under AFL Radio Show Green Condemns Case Bill; Condemns Slave Measure

Sharp Case Bill Debate Set for AFL Radio Show

Washington, D. C.—A lively radio discussion on whether Congress should approve the Case bill is in store for the March 2 AFL "America Today" program over a coast-to-coast NBC network.

Participants in the radio debate include Robert J. Watt, for the AFL; Tom Howard, for the United States Chamber of Commerce, and Fred Bailey, for the National Grange.

Since the AFL has come out uncompromisingly against the legislation, the National Grange has endorsed it, with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce adopting a middle-of-the-road policy, the debate should be exciting as well as instructive.

That's what the Chamber and the others to follow each Sunday during the month of March. The program originates at 11:30 p. m., Eastern Time, in Washington, but they are carried over radio and date in some localities, so usually your local newspapers for the exact time of broadcast.

Beginning in April, the AFL will switch to the Columbia Broadcasting System for a new series of 13 weekly programs to be entitled "Crossroads of America." These programs will be broadcast Saturday afternoon at 5:45 p. m., Eastern Time. They will feature interviews by Bill Dowd, now CBS commentator, with labor officials and rank and file men in various industries.

Schwelbensch Joins Fight on Bill As Its Defeat Is Predicted

Washington, D. C.—Condemning the Case bill as a "monstrous" anti-labor measure, AFL President William Green told the Senate Labor Committee that the federation would oppose it "uncompromisingly with all our collective and political strength."

In a letter to the committee, Green charged that the same sinister influence which has been behind the Smith-Connally Act on the labor laws have sought to inspire "angry hater" for organized labor.

Mr. Green literally told the Case bill apart, analyzing it section by section, and demonstrating, forcefully how dangerous and hypocritical its provisions are.

His analysis took immediate effect. Senator James H. Murray, chairman of the Senate Labor Committee, predicted the bill never would be reported out of committee. He said it was "an extreme measure, designed to destroy the labor union."

Secretary of Labor Harold Ickes followed Mr. Green to the witness stand and said that the Case bill at the Case bill. He warned that the bill would "initiate an era of industrial warfare" and called it "a bill to destroy the labor union," heavily weighted against labor.

In his analysis of the bill, Mr. Green directed heavy fire against the provision in the bill which would allow the government to interfere in the labor market.

SEEK SECURITY FOR MORE

Washington, D. C.—Insurance coverage for 21 million additional persons, including household domestics and farmers, and larger benefit amounts under the Social Security Act, were proposed by A. J. Altmeyer, chairman of the Social Security Administration.

Altmeyer presented 5 points in his recommendations for changes in old-age and survivors' insurance, and testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee. They were:

- (1) Extend to all persons gainfully employed, whether or not in the military or naval service.
- (2) Coverage for the self-employed.
- (3) Increase benefits under both old-age and survivors' insurance.
- (4) Permanent disability benefits.
- (5) Methods for financing.

President Signs Employment Bill, Calling It 'Beginning of Road'

Washington, D. C.—President Truman signed the watered-down "labor employment" bill which he called "the beginning of the road" to the solution of the recurring problems of mass unemployment and business depression.

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Prices Due To Rise 10 Per Cent As Result of New Truman Policy

Washington, D. C.—Authoritative warnings that the cost of living may skyrocket as a result of the new Truman policy of wage-price control, have been issued by the National War Labor Relations Board.

The board's statement, issued in the Federal Reserve Board in testimony before the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, said that the new policy would cause prices to rise 10 per cent.

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Jobless Pay Won By Union In Precedent-Making Pact

Philadelphia—Through peaceful negotiation, undisturbed by strike tactics, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBA) has won a precedent-making pact with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

The pact, which was signed by the UBA and the NLRB, provides for the payment of wages to jobless workers during the period of a strike.

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